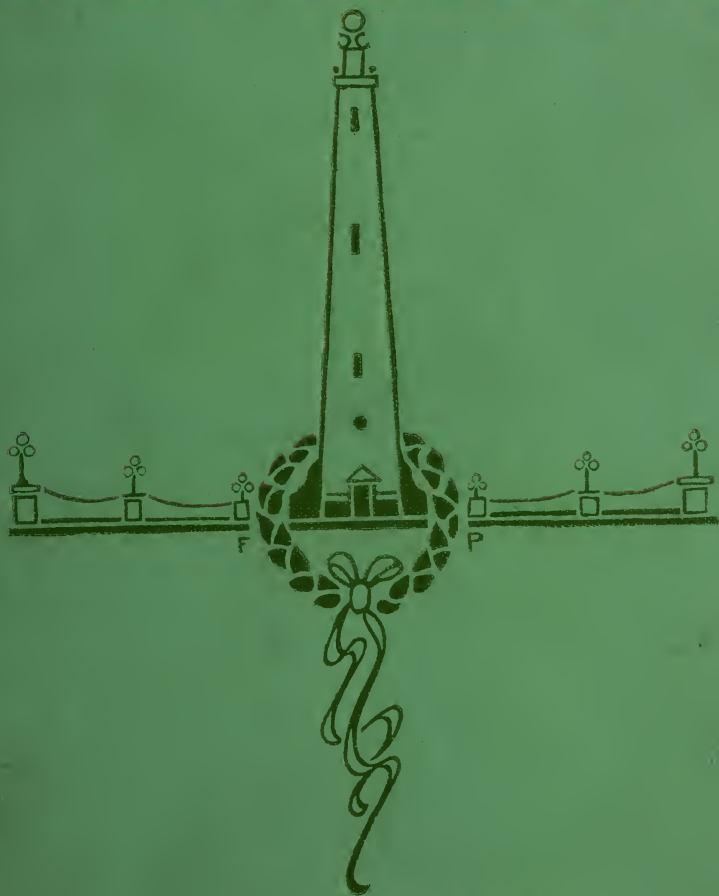


FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM



Armistead C. Gordon



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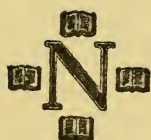
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FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM







FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

Poems of Commemoration

BY

ARMISTEAD C. GORDON

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GATE," "ROBIN AROON," AND "WILLIAM FITZ-
HUGH GORDON: HIS LIFE, TIMES AND
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A limited edition of two hundred copies of this book, containing five of the ten poems now included in it, was published in 1898, and has long been out of print.



TO

LIEUT.-COLONEL RAWLEY W. MARTIN

OF THE 53RD VIRGINIA REGIMENT, WHO LED
THE CONFEDERATE LINE OVER THE STONE
WALL IN PICKETT'S CHARGE AT
GETTYSBURG, JULY 3, 1863.

*To him who through the summer sunshine led,
As to a bridal, an immortal line
Up those wild heights,—whose feet were first to
tread*

*The wine-press of that passion;—a divine
And dazzling glory that shall deathless shine
Across the years for those whose spirits stir,
What time they see in memory Armistead
With hat on sabre leap the wall, and hear
The cannon's thunderous roar drowned in the
charging cheer.*



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THE GARDEN OF DEATH

*“The grief that circled his brows with a crown
of thorns was also that which wreathed them with
the splendor of immortality.”*

SAVONAROLA.

.

Read at the unveiling of the Confederate
Monument in Thornrose Cemetery, Staunton,
Virginia, September 25. 1888.

THE GARDEN OF DEATH

I

Where are they who marched away,
Sped with smiles that changed to tears,—
Glittering lines of steel and gray
Moving down the battle's way—
Where are they these many years?

Garlands wreathed their shining swords;
They were girt about with cheers,
Children's lisplings, women's words,
Sunshine and the songs of birds.—
They are gone so many years.

“Lo! beyond their brave array
Freedom's august dawn appears:”
Thus we said: “The brighter day
Breaks above that line of gray.”—
Where are they these many years?

All our hearts went with them there,
All our love, and all our prayers.
What of them? How do they fare,—
They who went to do and dare,
And are gone so many years?

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

What of them who went away,
Followed by our hopes and fears?
Braver never marched than they,
Closer ranks to fiercer fray.—
Where are they these many years?

II

Borne upon the Spartan shield,
Home returned that brave array
From the blood-stained battle-field
They might neither win nor yield.
That is all, and here are they.

That is all. The soft sky bends
O'er them, lapped in earth away;
Her benignest influence lends,—
Dews and rains and radiance sends
Down upon them, night and day.

Over them the Springtide weaves
All the verdure of her May;
Past them drift the sombre leaves,
When the heart of Autumn grieves
O'er their slumbers.—What care they?

What care they, who failed to win
Guerdon of that splendid day—

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

Freedom's day—they saw begin,
But that, 'mid the battle's din,
Faded in eclipse away?

All is gone for them. They gave
All for naught. It was their way
Where they loved. They died to save
What was lost. The fight was brave.
That is all; and here are they.

III

—Is that all? Was Duty naught?
Love, and Faith made blind with tears?
What the lessons that they taught?
What the glory that they caught
From the onward sweeping years?

Here are they who marched away
Followed by our hopes and fears;
Nobler never went than they
To a bloodier, madder fray,
In the lapse of all the years.

Garlands still shall wreath the swords
That they drew amid our cheers:
Children's lisplings, women's words,
Sunshine, and the songs of birds
Greet them here through all the years.

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

With them ever shall abide

All our love and all our prayers.

—“What of them?” The battle’s tide

Hath not scathed them. Lo! they ride

Still with Stuart down the years.

“Where are they who went away,

Sped with smiles that changed to tears?”

—Lee yet leads the lines of gray,—

Stonewall still rides down this way.

They are Fame’s through all the years!

ROSES OF MEMORY

“On every ragged gray cap the Lord God Almighty laid the sword of His imperishable knight-hood.”

HENRY WOODFIN GRADY.

Read before the Pickett-Buchanan Camp of
Confederate Veterans, at Norfolk, Virginia, on
Memorial Day, June 19, 1890.

ROSES OF MEMORY

A rose's crimson stain—

A rose's stainless white—

Fitly become the immortal slain

Who fell in the great fight.

When Armistead died amid his foes,

Girt by the rebel cheer,

God plucked a soul like a white rose,

In June time o' the year.

The blood in Pickett's heart

Was of a ruddier hue

Than the reddest bloom whose petals part

To welcome heaven's dew.

I think the fairest flowers that blow

Should greet the life-stream shed

In that historic long ago

By this historic dead.

The immemorial years

Such valor never knew,

As poured a flood of crimson blood

At Gettysburg with you.

Living and dead, in faith the same,

I see you on that height,

Crowned with the rosy wreath of fame,

Won in the fatal fight.

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

Not these had made afraid
King Arthur's mystic sword—
Not Bayard's most chivalric blade,
Nor Gideon's, for the Lord.
Yours was the strain of high emprise,
Yours the unfaltering faith,—
The honor lofty as the skies,
The duty strong as death.

When Douglas flung the heart
Of Bruce amid his foes,
And said: "He leads. We do not part:
I follow where he goes";
No mightier impulse stirred his soul
Than that which up yon height
Moved you with Pickett toward the goal
Of freedom in that fight.

The fair goal was not won,
The famous fight was lost;
But never shone the allseeing sun
On more heroic host.
Your deeds of mighty prowess shame
All deeds of derring-do
With which Time's bloody pages flame.
—Hail and farewell to you!

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

Unto the dead farewell!

They are hid in the dark and cold;
And the broken shaft and the roses tell

What is left of the tale untold.

They are deaf to the martial music's call

Till a judgment dawn shall break,

When the trumpet of Truth shall proclaim
to all:

“They perished for my sake!”

Let them be quiet here

Where birds and blossoms be;—

And hail to you, who bring the tear

And the rose of memory

To water and deck each lowly grave

Of those, who in God's sight

With loyal hearts their hearts' blood gave

For the eternal right!

Alike for low and high

The roses white and red:

For valor and honor cannot die,—

And they were of these dead.

The private in his jacket of gray,

And the general with his star,

The Lord God knighted alike that day,

In the red front of War.



“PRO MONUMENTO SUPER MILITES
INTEREMPTOS ”

*“ Gladly we should rest ever, had we won
Freedom: we have lost, and very gladly rest.”*

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

Read at the unveiling of the Monument to the
Private Soldiers and Sailors of the Confederacy
at Richmond, Virginia, May 30, 1894.

“PRO MONUMENTO”

Since that spring morning when the first dread
gun

Boomed o'er the harbor of the seaport town,
Fired by Virginia's lion-hearted son
Who would not live to see his flag go down,
Long years have passed away,—
Youth's gold has turned to gray;
The old men fade and die; the young age day by
day.

But ere pale Death shall stand with equal feet
Hard by each door—the door of old or young,—
That glory can be wrested from defeat
Let an “*Io Triumphe!*” here be sung,
Yielding the meed of praise—
Of laurels and green bays—
To young and old alike who fought in those lost
days.

Brighter than any born of time or fate—
More beautiful than e'er beheld of men—
Fronting the nations stood the fair young State,
And “Rebel” was the splendid badge again

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

Worn by the sons of those
Whom Freedom's feudal foes
Had learned to bow before when Washington
arose.

They gathered round her beautiful bright form,
With glittering bayonets fixed to ready guns,
Stirred by that passion Liberty keeps warm
In every pulse of all her patriot sons,
Offering upon her shrine
The sacrifice divine
Of Love; and each man swore, "Her holy cause
is mine!"

Her cause was theirs and Freedom's. For such
cause

Men have died gladly since that ancient day
When the Three Hundred gave a Myriad pause
For Grecian freedom at Thermopylæ.

These drew the Spartan sword;
These knew the Spartan word:—
"*With it, or on it!*" These the Spartan spirit
stirred.

On the most glowing page of human story
Are writ in lines of light their deathless names.
Our heritage is their eternal glory,—
Their record of undying deeds is Fame's.

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

The immemorial roll
Of her resplendent scroll
Their honor and their valor shall extol.

O'er that first field, made red with their first
blood,
Rang through the tumult as a bugle-call
His kingly voice, who royally bestowed
On Jackson's soldiers "standing like a wall"
The battle-accolade,—
Knighting the great Brigade,
And him who at its head had drawn his sword
and prayed.

Booted and spurred, his troopers riding ever
Ready for the fierce fray, entwined around
His brows the laurel-leaves that made forever
Thenceforth the name of Stuart glory-crowned:
They followed where he led;
They conquered where he bled;
Gladly had each one died in the lost leader's
stead.

Can you not hear booming across the years
The thunderous echoes of young Pelham's
guns?
There went to war than her red cannoneers
None higher-hearted of the South's true sons.

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

Whatever else betide,
Down the dim years they ride,
Who joyous rode to death as bridegroom to his
bride.

Beyond the vast of time we can descry
In memory the white foam and the sweep
Of the great ram, Virginia; and on high
The Southern pennant fluttering o'er the deep;
And hear the sullen roar
Of the grim guns she bore
Proclaiming Freedom's fight from listening shore
to shore.

In many a battle on the wandering wave
The sailors whom this shaft commemorates
Wrote high on Glory's record that the brave
Who fall for Freedom sleep at Freedom's gates;
That after life lived free,
Life lost for Liberty
Is God's most gracious gift that hath been or
shall be.

For Freedom! aye! for Freedom! 'Twas this hope
That sent the steady, steel-tipped line of gray,
Fringed with hell's fires, up the steep slippery
slope
Of Gettysburg, on that most fateful day

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

That found our pathway crossed
By an outnumbering host;—
That witnessed high hopes flown; that saw the
dear Cause lost.

Unflinching in their grave fidelity,—
Steadfast in purpose to the bitter end,—
They closed thin ranks, and set brave eyes to see
And dauntless hearts to bear what Fate should
send;—
Not looking vainly back
Along the traversed track,—
But facing War's last blast, its hurricane and
wrack.

When came the bitter end, the bugle blew
Its last sad note, that brought the blinding tears
Down wasted cheeks from eyes that only knew
Honor and Death through all the weary years.
The long hard fight was done;
Silenced was every gun;
And what we lost, e'en now they do not dream,
who won.

Let not the worth of any such be weighed
By battle's balance. They who glorified
Their righteous cause and lived, and they who
made
The sacrifice supreme, in that they died

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

To keep their country free,
Alike gave men to see
What hero-hearts were theirs who thus loved
Liberty!

They did their duty in the leal fearless fashion
Of antique knighthood's flower, each man a
knight,—

Careless if Death, dividing peace from passion,
Whispering, should greet them in the roar of
fight,—

Or Life to ceaseless pain
Should lead them forth again;
Knowing that duty done is never done in vain.

Time shall not dim their memory. The web
The spider weaves may hang across the mouth
Of the dismantled cannon; and the ebb
And flow of erstwhile battle in the South
Be but the shadowy gleam
Of a long vanished dream;

But ever over all this shaft shall loom supreme,

Silently telling in majestic beauty

Through all the years the story of their faith,—
Their love of Truth, of Freedom and of Duty—
Transcendent Love, triumphant over Death.

Harm now can reach them never:

Their fame is sure forever

While stands the sacred Hill, or flows the shining
River.

THE FOSTERING MOTHER

“And ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free.”—JOHN viii. 32.

Read June 14, 1898, at the dedication of the new buildings of the University of Virginia, replacing those destroyed by fire October 27, 1895.

THE FOSTERING MOTHER

The dawn of summer breaks in beauty o'er her,
Crowned Queen, and seated on her throne once
more;
Gather again her children to adore her,—
To hail her soul-compelling as of yore,—
Where she sits girdled with an olden glory,
Turning the latest page of her illumined
story:—

An open book that he who runs may read,—
Annals of patience, courage, sacrifice,
Blazoned with lofty thought and splendid deed,
Science and song and battle's great emprise;
Scroll of the intellect's majestic sway;
Scripture of hope and faith that shall not fade
away.

One name, before which none in all time ever
Hath been or shall be, shining there is writ:—
Worker of Revolutions, mighty giver
Of Freedom's Charter, and the Voice of it.
When kingdoms shake, and iron empires fall,
Through multitudinous time shall ring the
clarion call

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

Of the eternal lesson that he taught:—

“The gift of God is Freedom.” Never gift,
In all the ages with His promise fraught,
Hath been bestowed like this one to uplift
Mortality to godhood, and to light
Man’s pathway through the years till Time be
put to flight.

It is the gift of God. Philosophy

Might not devise it; art might never limn
Its beauty; in the realm of poesy
It were undreamed of, were it not of Him.
Science, whose feet are with the lightnings shod,
Had never found it; for it is the gift of God.

And when the nations arm them for the fray

With hearts of fire and force of triple steel,
To test the durance on some fateful day
Of Tyranny or Freedom, they shall feel—
Whether on blood-drenched sod or wandering
wave,—
The conquest theirs who know its sovereign
strength to save.

Let us rejoice, then, that upon her scroll,—

Whereon our Mother reads the unfettered creed,
The sacrificial courage of the soul,

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

The untrammelled thought that works the
deathless deed,—

Is written first, to last through latest years,

This gift of God, though gained with immemo-
rial tears.

Teaching the lesson of that morning Voice

To all her children, peace encompassed her,
Till dawned a day in springtime, when the choice:

“Death or Dishonor!” made her pulses stir
In scorn of life dishonored. “For the truth
Go forth and die!” she said to her immortal
youth.

The drum beat, and they answered. As they
stood

In the forefront of war, a sacred band,
And poured the red libation of their blood
At Freedom’s altar for their native land,
The stricken Mother wrote in words of flame:—
“For Truth’s most holy cause,” o’er each re-
splendent name.

For Truth and Freedom! Not the nameless
dead,

Who through the centuries by the Grecian sea
Sleep in the narrow pass they kept, shall shed

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

A nobler lustre upon Liberty,
Than these heroic hearts to whom she taught
That Spartan fortitude is born of Spartan
thought.

Fronting defeat, she heard the drumbeat cease,—
She heard the cannonading die away.—
Counting her graves beneath the star of peace,
With her dumb memories of that ended day
Sacred to Freedom, glorified by death,
She turned her holiest page in more exalted
faith.

“ In storm or sunshine this one thing is sure,
And shall be, through His everlasting years:—
The gift of God is destined to endure,”—
So wrote she, “ though ye take it e’en with
tears,
Heartbreak and agony and bloody sweat.
They who have loved it once have never lost it
yet.”

It is her lesson still. Her slain sons sleeping
A last long sleep, their battles all forgot,—
Whom neither love nor prayers, nor any weeping
Might bring back to the land where they are
not,—
Speak from the grave the message of their gain,
That they are likewise free who slumber with
the slain.

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

It is the lesson still that to the living,

Who gather 'neath her mantle's ample fold,
She gives as one most worthy of her giving,—

Better than fame, and finer far than gold:—
The gift of God, that hath been and shall be,
To know the eternal Truth, and knowing, to
be free.

Freedom of thought, word, deed,—the wider
scope,

The nobler sense, the keener, deeper sight,
The truer aim, the holier, higher hope,

The more abundant strength, the loftier light,—
All these are written fair for him to read

Upon her open page, who learns her larger
creed.

“The gift of God is Freedom.” To the end

God grant it be the lesson she shall teach,
Until its echoes, circling earth, shall blend

In one deep chorus of thought, deed and
speech,—

When all the peoples upon land or sea

Shall know the Truth at last, and it shall make
them free.



MOSBY'S MEN

“Honneur fleurit sur la fosse.”

OLD FRENCH SAW.

Read at the Seventh Annual Reunion of the survivors of the Forty-third Battalion, Virginia Cavalry, Mosby's Men, at Fairfax Court House, Virginia, September 11, 1900.

MOSBY'S MEN

They tell the tale, with magic word
The spirit's depths to stir,
Of him who fought with Sidney's sword,
Or rode with Percy's spur;
For Honor bourgeons from the mould
And blossoms from the dust,
Though Percy's shining spur be cold,
And Sidney's sword be rust.

In a yet unforgotten day,
When hearts and hopes were high,
A little band rode down this way
Whose fame will never die.
Their cause was right, their blades were bright,
And Honor shone again,
A cloud by day, a fire by night,
To beckon Mosby's Men.

The wilderness their secret kept,—
They bivouacked 'neath the blue;
The tents they spread—the sleep they slept—
The foeman never knew.
No bugle blast nor tuck of drum
Proclaimed their headlong fight;
—The startled picket saw them come,
And perished with the sight.

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

They came as lightnings come; they went
As swift the west-winds blow;
And blood ran red and life was spent
Where'er they met the foe.
They buckled to the deadly fray
Where they were one to ten.
—He spurred and drew to die or slay,
Who rode with Mosby's Men.

They carried on their sabres there
The fortunes of the Truth;
The breath they breathed was Freedom's air,
In their immortal youth.
It boots not if the unequal fight
Was lost, though fierce and long:
—'Tis written that eternal right
Can never be made wrong.

Down the dim years, long gone, once more
Appears that phantom band;
I hear the clanging charge of yore,—
I see a war-rent land.
The vision of the desperate strife
Returns through mists again.
—Those were the bravest days of life,
The days of Mosby's Men.

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

The bravest days of all that shine
Through immemorial years;
Days of life's sacrificial wine,
Of Love's divinest tears;
When Valor guarded all the land,—
When hearts and hopes were high,—
And Love and Death went hand in hand
With Faith, that could not die.

—But Harry Percy's spur is cold,
And Sidney's sword is rust;
And many a lad, who rode of old
With that gay band, is dust.
While those, bereft, who linger yet,
Are wearier now than then:—
—What matter? They cannot forget
That they were Mosby's Men;—

—That they were Mosby's Men, and rode,
As soldiers love to ride,
Where the red stream of battle flowed
With its most swelling tide.
—No other stream may run so red,—
No higher tide may flow,—
Till God shall wake the dreamless dead,
When the last trumpets blow.

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

—The circling seasons come and go,
Springs dawn, and autumns set;
And winter with its drifted snow
Repays the summer's debt;
And song of bird and tint of bloom
Are gay and bright, as when
Those gallant lads rode to their doom,
Long since, with Mosby's Men.

But winter wears a sadder guise,
And ghastlier for its snow,
To him who looks with time-worn eyes
On scenes of long ago;
And neither autumn's glow, nor spring,
Nor summer's emerald sod
To hearts grown old again may bring
The dead who sleep with God.

It is His will. The sword may rust
That battles for the right;—
The banner may be trailed in dust
That leads the holiest fight;—
And Wrong may wear the victor's name,
Where one shall strive with ten;—
But fate can never take from fame
The deeds of Mosby's Men.

VITÄI LAMPADA

A SONG FOR A CENTENARY YEAR

“Et quasi cursores vitäi lampada tradunt.”

LUCRETIVS, “*De Natura Rerum*,” ii. 77.

Read before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of
William and Mary College, Williamsburg, Vir-
ginia, February 19, 1901.

VITAIĀ LAMPADA

A SONG FOR A CENTENARY YEAR

Unto the year of liberty
He kept the gift his master gave,
Who wore the shackles of the slave;
But when death's hand had set him free,
He lost it in the grave.¹

No child of his might hope to reap
The harvest where his hand had sown;
No vassal, where the high sun shone
On earth, his father's field might keep
Unhindered as his own.

Old forces of the fettered earth—
Sultan and emperor and king,—
Scorned the poor, patient, plodding thing
That crawled and crept to death from birth,—
For whom death had no sting.

Through circling centuries the years
Were born and withered into dust;
And power still wrenched from hopes august
The fruits of immemorial tears
In rapine and in lust.

¹ Ezekiel, 46:17.

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

And then there came the voice of One
Crying amid the wilderness,
Like John's, above that dumb distress:
"The day dawns. An all-golden sun
Rises, the world to bless!

"For her it makes the pathway clear
Who bends no knee and knows no rod,—
Who, springing from War's bloody sod,
Yet bears what men shall hold most dear:—
The perfect peace of God.

"Her name is Freedom; and her home,
Upbilled here by patriot hands,
The opprest shall hail from alien lands,
Where tyrants bind beyond the foam
The soul with iron bands."

And ancient and immortal hope
Returned—the hope that men had had,
And lost—what time that clear voice bade
The long-locked gates of morning ope,—
The enlightened world be glad.

And in that dawn of liberty
They saw how good the gift God gave,—
The brave gift given to the brave,—
The free gift given for the free,—
His gift, that true men crave.

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

They took the gift in scorn of those
 Who bowed the head and crooked the knee,—
 Who, blind and sordid, would not see;—
And held, against embattled foes,
 The guerdon of the free.

They toiled and wrought in faith and hope,
 And reared and builded, large and strong,
 A Temple, where the oppress might throng,—
A house, from corner-stone to cope
 Buttressed against the wrong.

And dwelling 'neath serener skies
 They lived with Truth and Peace and Right;
 While fled from that ethereal light
The fading wrongs and groping lies
 That battened on the night.

Love, fraught with knowledge, handed down
 The hallowed boon from sire to son.
 —Who saw their handiwork well done,
And slept, foresaw the centuries crown
 The work their hands begun.

The freedom of the unshackled man
 Inspired the order of the state;
 Peace, smiling, sat within the gate;
And where Love's perfect purpose ran,
 Hope held no fear of Fate.

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

And then dark winds arose, and drave
Dun clouds across a sullen sky.
The Temple's veil was rent. A cry
Above the tumult rang: "We save
The gift of God, or die!"

And hearkening, as their sires of old
Who heard that earlier trumpet call,
They answered from the outer wall:
"We pledge our richer things than gold,—
Our lives, our loves, our all!"

Their heads are grizzled now, who drew
The mother's milk that day, when War
Rose on the horizon like a star
To kindle hope;—when Freedom grew
So near that was so far.

And clouds have lowered and fled; and suns
Have shone; strange faces intervene;
The blood-stained grass is ever green;
And only in our dreams the guns
Peal, and the flag is seen.

In all the wars of all the world
That men have known on land or sea,
Where Hope hath welcomed Liberty,
No fairer flag was e'er unfurled
Than this, to lead the free.

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

No belted knight, who in his grave
Hath long since crumbled into dust,
E'er drew a blade in cause more just;
Nor hero fought a fight more brave,—
A battle more august.

Far off the bayonets mix and gleam,
The tides of conflict ebb and flow;
The shotted guns of long ago
Boom faint and far; as in a dream
The battle-bugles blow.

Though but in dreams they gather yet,—
If but in dreams their faces shine,—
God keep for us those dreams divine,
That we through life may not forget
To love the thin gray line.

—“Here rest who for their country died,
And with it: they are fallen on sleep,”
The Roman wrote.—But we? We keep
The ancient altars lit beside
The graves of those we weep.

There flames the fire that shall not wane,
Caught from the torch that ever burns;
And thence celestial Hope returns,
That, dying, springs to life again
From our funereal urns.

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

And this the litany we pray:

That God who made may keep us free;

That storms may vex no more the sea,

Where, brooding 'neath a cloudless day,

Still sits Alcyone.

THE STONEWALL BRIGADE

*“ We shall find our lost youth when the bugle is
blown.”*

THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON.

Read at the Reunion of the survivors of the
Stonewall Brigade, at Staunton, Virginia, Octo-
ber 16, 1901.

THE STONEWALL BRIGADE

They come again, who in immortal story,
Past failure, death and tears,
Bore their unfading banner to its glory
Through the laborious years.

The frost is in their veins; the feet are laggard,
That sped to meet the foe;—
Yet shines on every face, however haggard,
The light of long ago.

For each the peaceful years have vanished, seeing
His comrades marching there.
Once more they live and move and have their
being
In a diviner air.

And shaking off the pulseless, feeble fashion
Of this degenerate day,
They thrill again with the heroic passion
Of Stonewall Jackson's Way.

—What boots it, though the fight was lost?
—They fought it
As soldiers should:—That youth

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

Passed with it, and was lost too? Lo! these
thought it
Well spent, since for the Truth.

They march with ghosts of comrades, dead and
gory,—
Down the autumnal years
Still bearing that rent banner, starred with
glory,
Past failure, death and tears.

Lost Cause! Lost Youth!—Nay, out of War's red
sowing
Hath sprung the harvest grain:
Their cause is Fame's; and the old bugles,
blowing,
Bring back their youth again.

FOR A SOLDIER

*“I have fought a good fight;
I have kept the faith.”*

Harry C. Tinsley, Richmond Howitzers, C. S. A.,
1861-1865. Died Aug. 21, 1902.

FOR A SOLDIER

Not 'mid the din of battle long ago,
But in the lingering clutch of later pain
Death found him, whom we shall not see
again

Lifting a fearless front to every foe.
Yet shall suns somewhere shine for him, and blow
The lilies and the roses without stain,
Who, through the lengthened years, in heart
and brain
Knew most of storm and winter with its snow.

For it is written in the starry sky,—
In the vast spaces and the silences,—
That God's eternal universe is his
Who fears not, though he live or if he die.
—A soldier to the dauntless end was he,
As riding with his red artillery.



NEW MARKET

A THRENODY

*"Theirs were not souls wherein dull Time
Could domicile decay, or house
Decrepitude!*

*They passed from earth ere manhood's prime,
Ere years had power to dim their brows,
Or chill their blood."*

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN, "*The Princess of
Tir-, Owen and Tir-Connell.*"

Read June 23, 1903, at the dedication of Sir
Moses Ezekiel's Monument to the memory of the
Cadets of the Virginia Military Institute who
fell in the battle of New Market, Va., May 15,
1864.

NEW MARKET

How shall the eternal fame of them be told,
Who, dying in the heyday of life's morn,
Thrust from their lips the chalice of bright gold
Filled to the brim with joy, and went forlorn
Into the abysmal darkness of that bourn,
Whence they who thither go may nevermore
return?

The circling seasons pass in old progression
Of beauty and of immortality;
The ancient stars march on in far procession,
And immemorial winds sweep o'er the sea;
The mountains drop their wine; the flowers
bloom;
While these, who should have lived, sleep in an
early tomb.

No blight had touched the garlands that they
wore,
Dewy and fresh with innocence and ruth;
No dead illusions or spent glammers bore
With heaviness upon them. Their gay youth
Caught but the bubbles on the beaker's brim,
Nor e'er beheld life's lees with eyes grown old
and dim.

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

Were they in love with death's forgetfulness,
Thus to lie down with the enduring dead?
Had wood and stream lost all their loveliness,
Or morning's sunshine faded overhead,
That they sought surcease of life's sorrows there,—
Leaving wan Love to weep o'er boyhood's sunny
hair?

All the old questionings rise to our lips
In the sad contemplation of Youth slain:
Life's hidden meaning, and Death's dark eclipse,—
The passion and the pathos and the pain;—
The unanswering answer that the wisest reads
In the grim mystery that hangs behind the
creeds.

And yet—and yet—we old, whose heads are
gray,
Whose hearts are heavy, and whose steps are
slow
With journeying on this rough and thorny way,—
We, who live after them,—what may we know
Of their ecstatic rapture thus to have died,—
The marvellous, sleepless souls that perished in
their pride?

If the worn hearts and weary fall on sleep
With a deep longing for its sweet repose,

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

Shall not they, likewise, whom the high Gods
keep,

Die, while yet bloom the lily and the rose?
To each man living comes a day to die:—
What better day, than when Truth calls to
Liberty?

Writ in the rocks, the world's primeval page
Is old past human skill to interpret it,
Save where it speaks to grief of man's gray age,
And with the end of all things is o'erwrit:—
All things save one, that hath unfading youth
And strength and power and beauty,—clear-
eyed Truth.

On mountain top—in valley—by the sea,—
Wherever sleep the patriots who have died
In her high honor,—at Thermopylæ,—
At Bannockburn,—or where great rivers glide
To the wide ocean bordering our own shore,
Truth sees the holy face of Freedom evermore!

The blood-stained face of Freedom, that hath
wrought

For man a magic and a mystery:
Whose bright blade, e'en when broken, yet hath
bought

A grave with the eternal for the free.

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

—Freedom and Truth,—these went beside them
there,
Marching to deathless death, forever young and
fair.

—“Send the Cadets in,—and may God forgive!”
—Who spake the words had welcomed rather
death.

But Truth dies not, and Liberty shall live,
E'en though Youth wither in the cannon's
breath.

—And at the order, debonair and gay,
They moved into the front of an immortal day.

“Battalion forward!” rang the sharp command;
“Guide centre!” and the banner was unfurled.
Then, as if on parade, the little band

Dressed to the flag. A sad and sombre world
Thrills with the memory of how they went
Into that raging storm of fire and carnage blent.

A worn and weary world in sorrow weeps
For high hopes vanished at life's sunny morn;
—Yet Truth, with eyes that never falter, keeps
Her gaze on Freedom's face, that smiles in
scorn

Of death for them who wear the laurelled
crown,—
The early dead, who died with an achieved
renown.

FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM

Creeds fade; faiths perish; empires rise and fall;

And as the shining sun goes on his way,
Oblivion covers with a dusty pall

The life of man, predestined to decay.
—Yet is there one thing that shall never die:
The memory of the Dead for Truth and Liberty.



LOST CAUSES

(L'ENVOI.)

"They never fail, who die in a great cause."

BYRON: *"Marino Faliero," Act II, Sc. 2.*

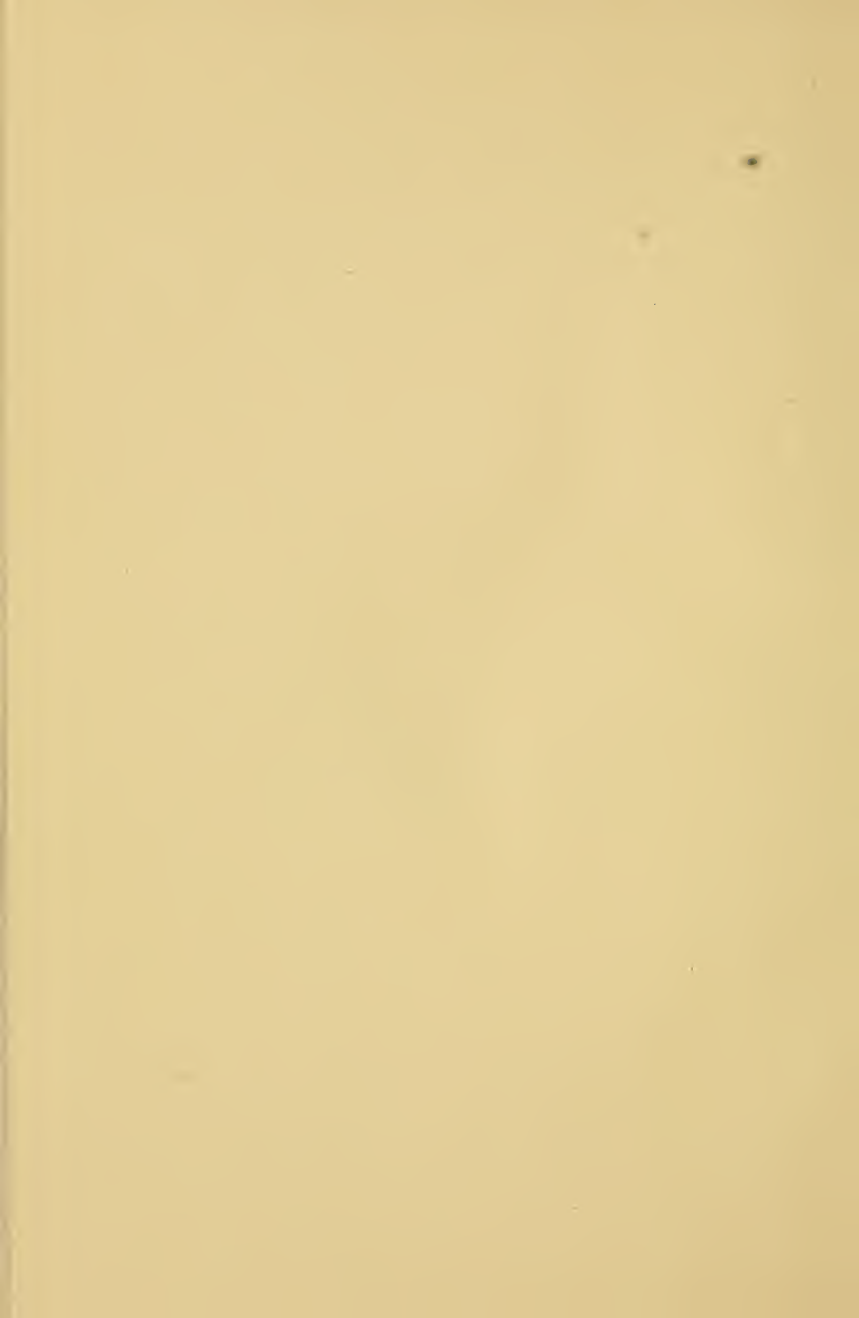


LOST CAUSES

(L'ENVOI)

*Cause of the Freed Souls, tempest-tossed,
Who passed in battle, and whose names
Are Glory's own—thy splendor flames
Beyond the stars! No cause is Lost
Whose dead are Love's and Fame's.*





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